Venerdì 17 maggio aula 211 (via Festa del Perdono) ore 10.30

Seminario
Nell'ambito del progetto
Trials of the Late Roman Republic

Towards a critique of digital reason

Interviene

Dr. C. Michael Sperberg-McQueen

Markup Language Specialist – Black Mesa Technologies LCC

Introduce Federico Russo

Per informazioni
federico.russo@unimi.it
silvia.gazzoli@unimi.it

la lente digitale
Seminario dipartimentale ricerca

Abstract

When we apply computers to humanistic questions, we rely, in some sense, on what might be called digital reason. In his great critiques of pure reason, practical reason, and judgement, Kant argues that the objects we perceive necessarily match the a priori forms of our experience and necessarily accord with the predetermined concepts of our understanding (the categories).

Does digital reason have similarly inescapable a priori forms of perception and cognition?

Are there digital analogues to the a priori forms space and time?

Are they inescapable or can we somehow work around the a priori forms? The powers and the limits of digital reason follow from two observations: digital reason can take into account anything and only things which we can represent digitally. And digital reason can only reason its way to (or: calculate) results which are accessible to the basic operations accessible to the underlying logic of the computing machine and which can be calculated in a manageable amount of time. There follows a discussion of the analog/digital distinction, of space and time in computational contexts, some limitations of digital representations, the interpretation of data, dire consequences when limits are not observed, the paradox of analysis (can logical implications really surprise us?), and the questions of autonomy and responsibility.